

Forged in Reflection

By Stephen Maas

I meet my own gaze, forged by trials.

The reflection is fractured, lines etched deep,
eyes holding stories of battles won and lessons learned.

I see a man tempered by challenge, shaped by hardship, strengthened
by all he endured. Yet beside my reflection stands her absence,
reminding me my trials were witness, not the war.

She carried pain with grace, faced fear daily, bore the harder journey.

Every scar whisper's endurance, of nights stayed present, loving
through helplessness.

The man staring back is raw, human, imperfect, still standing beneath
memories weight. Fragile at times, relentless in survival, and moving forward.